

Man's best friend may be perfect holiday gift

Molly Tippen
Staff Writer

Romulus Councilman William Wadsworth has a great gift suggestion for area residents. How about a new best friend? And he wants prospective pet owners to know that adopting an abandoned or stray animal will be a better gift than buying one.

The Romulus Animal Shelter takes in 2,000 lost and stray animal each year that need a caring home, and Wadsworth hopes residents will consider the needs of these cats and dogs before they purchase an animal.

"We have a great assortment down there right now," he said. "It only costs \$25 to adopt an animal, and if you can bring us a receipt to show that the animal has been spayed or neutered, we give you

The best thing about a pet is the companionship.

Romulus Councilman William Wadsworth

money back for that."

The animal shelter – which is located on Wayne and Goddard roads – is having a hard time keeping pace with the number of animals captured or turned in. A new shelter slated for construction next year will help with more space. Adoption activities – and making sure the animals are taken in by responsible owners – will be easier in the new facility, Wadsworth said.

For now, however, the situation can be heartbreaking.

About 15 cats and dogs are presently at the shelter, and most

are in good health, Wadsworth said.

"If they're not in good health, we don't adopt them out," he said. "And, if we don't have the particular type of pet a person is looking for we call around to other shelters to see if they can help."

Wadsworth added that it's up to residents to help ease the crowding of unwanted animals at the shelter.

"There are some people that think they want a pet, and then they find out they can't handle it," he said. "The easiest thing to do is just to take them some place and

put them out – I think it's terrible, just terrible."

Animals brought into the shelter are kept for as long as they need a home. Animals are not put down – shelter volunteers in other organizations that can take in the animals until a suitable home can be found.

But the need to find homes is both great and urgent, and help

out the animals also helps humans, Wadsworth said.

"The best thing about a pet is the companionship," he said.

The animal shelter is open to the public every day from 9-10:30 a.m., and from 3:30-5 p.m. Identification is required to adopt a pet.

For more information, call the shelter at (734) 942-9175.

Van Buren expects good 'New Year'

Andrea King
Staff Writer

The year is coming to a close and Van Buren Township officials are looking back on several accomplishments during 2006 and planning for 2007.

Some of the major projects in the township this year were the completion of Fire Station 2, the start of the south side master plan, the purchase of 42 acres for future municipal use and the re-election of Trustee Lianne Clair to the township board, according to the Township Supervisor Cindy King.

"The build of the fire station is very significant considering the last time anyone looked at that was 40 years ago," she said. "And, although the south side master plan is not a capital project, it is important."

Other noteworthy projects in 2006 include: the groundbreaking for Fire Station 1, work on the \$12 million equalization basin and dispatch and park improvements, like restroom facilities and a new motor boat launch.

"When you're looking at a \$12 million sewer project it may seem insignificant because it's not a public building, but it's not," said King.

When you're looking at a \$12 million sewer project it may seem insignificant because it's not a public building, but it's not.

Cindy King

The year also brought several public safety enhancements: a new fire chief, promotions, the first public safety awards ceremony, a new traffic unit and the start of dispatch services for the City of Belleville.

Bryce Kelley, director of planning and economic development, said housing development was way down for the year, but commercial development did see a lot of interest.

"Housing was down about 30 percent," he said. "As for commercial, we saw things from the Fifth Third Bank, Culver's restaurant, a new medical clinic, a Wal-Mart expansion and a JP Morgan and Chase office."

The economy continues to be troubling and finance remains a challenge, however, the board of

trustees worked hard to continue to make improvements for the better of the community, King said. They hope to continue that in 2007.

Next year residents will see plans for the south side master plan continue, the completion of Fire Station 1, utilization of the Wayne County grant funds and more park improvements, she said.

The public safety millage will also be up for renewal.

Kelley said residential building would still be down, but he does anticipate some growth.

"As the builders are looking at their products they'll have to come up with new and exciting models and prices," he said.

Kelley also suspects industrial development will increase in 2007, too.

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Woman looks back on long, productive life

Scott Spielman
Editor

The New Year will bring another milestone to Wayne resident Jane Woodrow.

Woodrow, who has lived in the community for 91 years, will turn 100 years old on Jan. 1.

"She still gets around and she's as sharp as a tack," said her granddaughter, Susan Oprican.

Woodrow traveled to America from England by boat in 1914, when she was 7 years old—and a good little English girl, she said.

Crossing the ocean proved to be quite an adventure, she said, because of the political climate at the time—and the climate itself.

"Boy, we had a hectic trip," Woodrow said. "We were chased by a German submarine—finally the captain put up an American flag and they left us alone." The U.S. had not yet entered the first World War at the time, so the American flag was a safer banner to fly than was the British one.

The submarine wasn't the only

obstacle they faced, either. The ship ran through a terrible storm on the way that caused it to pitch and plummet on huge waves.

"Everyone was vomiting, even the captain," Woodrow said. "We had to thank God we got out of that."

Once in the states she moved to Pontiac, where her father and brother lived. They had come over a few years before. They soon moved the Wayne area—her father was a florist at Eloise and they lived on the property there. He constructed the basket that still stands on the grounds.

She moved to Wayne shortly after that and has lived there ever since—she currently lives in Wayne Towers.

She went to school at Michigan and Merriman roads and that, too, was an up and down experience. One of her teachers—a German, didn't care for her or her English brother and harassed them constantly. The other children mocked her for her accent.

Other memories were better; she had another teacher that picked her up and took her to school every day—in a horse and buggy.

"If I was a good girl and helped clean up the board every day, she'd even give me a ride home, too," she said with a laugh.

Woodrow worked at Eloise for a while and, after that, at Oakwood Annapolis Hospital. She was a secretary and a nurse's aide there, working in the hospital nursery. She still gets together with a group of retirees from the hospital.

For more than 45 years, she lived on Newberry Street and remembers the good old days when they used to close down the streets for neighborhood block parties.

"It was a big day, with a big parade, picnics those were good days," she said.

She is also active with the Westland seniors group, the Wayne Golden Hour Club and the First United Methodist Church of



Jane Woodrow

Wayne.

"I like to do all kinds of things," she said. "I'm on the go all the time. That's what keeps you young, you know—you can't just sit still and feel sorry for yourself."

Woodrow received recognition from the Wayne City Council on Tuesday night and a card from President George W. Bush honoring her milestone—in addition to

the assorted gifts, card and well-wishes that come from a family with three grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, 11 great-great grandchildren and countless nieces and nephews.

She said the secret to her long happy life is her family and her faith in God.

"I'm feeling pretty good for 100 years old," she said, "but the Lord has been very, very good to me."



Feeding the hungry

Students who take part in the Wick Elementary Boys and Girls Club learned more about the value of helping others by dropping off food baskets to area residents last week. Students also dropped off baskets at the Romulus Helping Hand craft store for disbursement. Here Boys and Girls Club Director Carrie Young (second from left) stands with helpers (left to right) Elexas Lee, Jasmine Ellison, Nickky Smith, Gabrielle Hill, Brittney Burnette, Pavier Lee and James Newbill.

Cable

FROM PAGE 1

conduct business.

Mayor Alan Lambert said the city has had issues with the agreement with Comcast, and that other cable companies considered Romulus to be difficult to serve because the Detroit Metropolitan Airport occupies so much of the city.

"If it truly is something that is going to create competition, than it could be a good thing," he said. "We just don't know that yet. If

AT&T wanted to come here, that would be great."

Officials worry that the bill could unintentionally cause a redlining effect, but Steele said the bill prohibits that.

"The bill specifically prohibits the denial of services to a community based on race, national origin or any other factor," he said.

But small communities – with fewer people and therefore, fewer subscribers – could be placed at a disadvantage, said Sen. Ray Basham, who did not vote in favor of the bill.

"Companies like AT&T are in business to make money, and they

are going to want to service communities that are more densely populated," he said. "They're going to want to where they can make more money. I've heard all of the arguments for it, but in the end, I think the municipalities have a valid concern."

Franchise fees are used to run an extensive videotaping program and cable channel for the city, Lambert said.

"Those dollars pay for salaries, and other programming for seniors," he said.

Granholtz has indicated she may sign the bill in the near future.

Jeffries

FROM PAGE 1

attempt to conceal the crime.

Since the discovery of Jeffries' body, few details have emerged about why the little girl was killed. Monte declined to comment about what may have led to Jeffries' death, but did acknowledge that the process of finding the girl's killer is time-consuming. He said the case is definitely not cold.

"As long as we're getting leads, it's not cold," he said. "Most of the work is now being done at the crime lab. We're waiting for the results, and that unfortunately takes a long time."

Evidence from the crime scene – fibers, fluids, objects – are still being analyzed at the Michigan State Police Crime Laboratory in Northville. Monte said the information obtained at the scene could provide the big break police are looking for.

"I would say that we had close to 150 pieces of evidence that are being looked at right now," he said.

Much of the evidence was collected at the scene at Ecorse Road and from three search warrants executed after Jeffries was discovered.

About 40 to 50 suspects have been interviewed by Romulus police and more people will be interviewed, Monte said.

"We've canvassed the area near where Raven lived three times. We've talked to hundreds of people.

Monte pointed out that Jeffries lived in a high-crime area, and that individuals who

may have been in the area when the little girl disappeared who fear prosecution if they come forward do not have to worry about police officers going after them.

"I'm investigating a homicide," he said. "I'm not going to ask you why you were on that street."

Monte says he spends several hours a day working the Jeffries murder. Initially, the case was to be a joint investigation between the Detroit Police Homicide Bureau and the Romulus Police, but the two Detroit detectives that were assisting Monte were re-assigned.

"That's fairly standard in investigations," he said.

The investigation into Jeffries' disappearance began in Detroit, before she was discovered in Romulus.

Monte stressed that the killing has taken a toll on Jeffries' family, especially during the holidays. Monte said he speaks with a member of the Jeffries family about once a week.

"I speak frequently with her mother, Brenda, and her brothers," he said. "Brenda is reaching out to (Raven's) school, and I think they're finally beginning to accept what has happened. I do sense it's hard for them around the holidays."

He also hopes that someone, at this time of year, will help the family by sharing what they know because it's the right thing to do.

"We want all of the information we can get," he said.

Anyone with information about the murder of Raven Jeffries is asked to call Monte at the Romulus Detective Bureau at (734) 942-6887.

Koreans

FROM PAGE 1

need."

Learning to Give is a nationwide program that was

embraced by the Romulus Community School District about 5 years ago. Schools have organized food collections, clothing drives, and other events to help people in the immediate area. This year, students at Romulus Elementary collected

1,900 cans of food for needy residents for the holidays.

The Korean Education Broadcasting Service is similar to the U.S. Public Broadcasting Service, and is used in schools throughout that country as a tool to help children understand a

variety of subjects. A giving program would help extend the service mission, said Hwa Ham, who spoke with several students.

"In Korea, a program will be our (television special) first step in implementing a Learning to Give program," he said.

Ham said he thinks the concept will catch on in Korea as it has in the United States.

"We are hoping that the children in our country will be as receptive to the concept of philanthropy as children in Romulus are," he said.

OPINION

A real disconnect?

The vote that many in local government expected—and were concerned about—took place last week.

The Michigan Senate approved legislation that would radically alter the way cable companies operate.

The move, so far, is being hailed as a positive thing for consumers. It will bring in increased competition and therefore, more alternatives and reduced rates.

We'll see.

It's not the first time this kind of thing has been promised, and pardon us for being a little bit skeptical.

Our concerns extend beyond that, too, to the impact of local municipalities who use the franchise fees they negotiate—individually—to provide valuable services to the community.

Municipal leaders and their lobbying firms were so concerned about the legislation that they offered several potential amendments, none of which were added into the bill. This disconnect is also a concern as was the fact that the legislation was voted on by many legislators who will be out of office when it goes into effect.

The bill approved by the Senate does have some improvements over the initial incarnation. It provides some stipulations as the disbursement of the fees—perhaps most importantly that they will be paid directly the municipalities, not through a state office.

We still don't like the current form of the bill, though. We think it will have graver consequences for municipalities than the average citizen expects and the benefit to those cable subscribers will be negligible, at best.

It's important to have consistent standards and regulations, but this is one of those situations where the local people really need more control. What works for a municipality like Northville may not work in a place like Westland. What works in Westland may not even be suitable to one of their neighbors.

Perhaps the biggest source of this concern is our inherent trust or lack thereof of big business. The cable companies or telecommunications companies in general aren't exactly hurting for money, like many other industries in the state. The fact that they were willing to spend such an exorbitant amount of money in their pursuit of the bill and commit to a vast lobbying effort, tells us that they'll be the ultimate winner when the legislation is enacted. We'd rather if that victory had been preserved for the little guys.

This opinion has answers

Westland Council President Bill Wild asked for a legal opinion on the best way to fill impending vacancies on the city council, and City Attorney Angelo Plakas delivered.

The seven page treatise covered virtually every question that might arise through the possibly contentious process that will take place at the first meeting of the New Year, except one: should the name of potential appointees be made public?

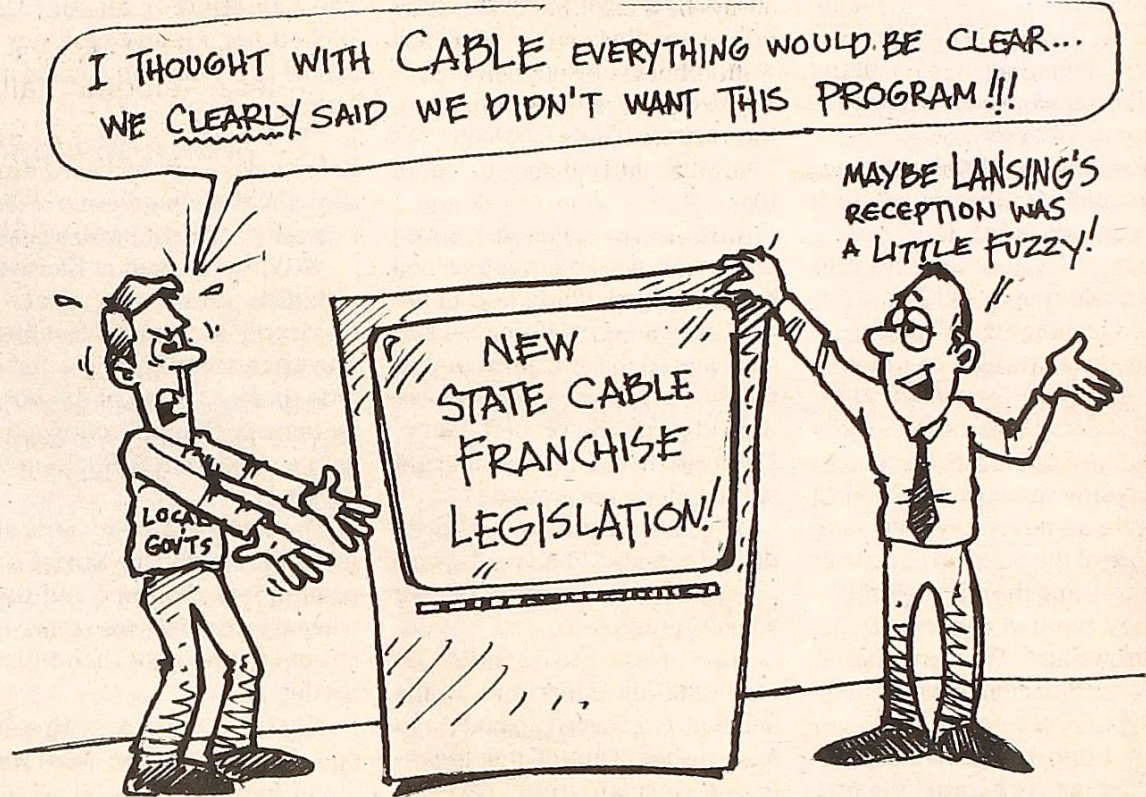
We think they should be.

Making these kinds of appointments can be a tricky situation, even in the most balanced of communities. No matter where they take place, there is usually an underlying concern that the 'old guard' will take care of their own. Nepotism is always suspected, if not outright alleged.

We don't think anything like that will go on at the city council—the days of unnecessarily contentious meetings seem, thankfully, to be in the past—but the more open the process is, the better it will be for all concerned.

The other side of the equation is that it can be embarrassing to

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A little change for the better

Hood up, dark glasses in place, I made my way last week into that monument of all that is wrong with corporate America: Wal-Mart.

I normally prefer to do all my shopping locally, pumping my few dollars into the smaller shops that need it more than the big boxes, but I had already determined that I was in search of something I couldn't find in downtown Northville, Plymouth or Wayne and I rationalized this trip because it was something where the cost (about \$3.50) would be dramatically overshadowed by the joy factor. Henry has given me a different Christmas list every day, and the toy I sought was the one thing on all of them.

Even so, I wasn't too proud of it.

I could hear the bell-ringer long almost as soon as I got out of my car. This one was really passionate about it, the clang-clang of the thing made up with volume what it lacked in rhythm. He was determined to be noticed, this volunteer was. Maybe he had been passed by too many hectic shoppers who followed the rule of guiltlessly ignoring such requests for donations: avoid eye contact.

I soon learned that that may have indeed been the case.

I followed into the store a man about my age,

which I'll describe as mid-30s.

He was making a bee-line for the bundled up ringer, but made a detour at the last second to avoid him, pretending to look at something out in the parking lot, instead.

Not very subtle, I thought. I had an easier solution this time. I didn't have any loose change in my pocket.

I nodded to the bell-ringer: "Maybe when I come out," I said.

He nodded back and "Merry Christmas."

Inside the Wal-Mart in Canton Township, there is a line of games of 'skill,' where people can put in a few coins and try to grab a stuffed animal from a zoo of others or a trinket from a field of small gray stones. The man I had followed into the store was in front of the stuffed animal machine, digging in his pockets for some loose change.

I admit that I am drawn to these machines more often than not. Henry has a growing collection of rubber playground balls plucked from a machine at the Emagine Theater in Canton. There are a few inexplicable stuffed animals strewn across his room, too—I've always thought the things that wind

See **Change**, page 5

'Scout'ing around for perfect gift

Forget Nintendo Wii or Playstation 3, Ipad or anything "Elmo": I have discovered the most coveted toy this Christmas: the rawhide chewy bone.

If the little ones in your home have the teeth for it, I would recommend it highly. It is calming for them, and it provides endless hours of entertainment, be it chewing on the bone, jumping at the bone or staring and staring and staring at the bone.

Yes, my wife and I decided our Christmas present to each other would be a dog: something neither of us had while growing up. Sure, we've known people with dogs our whole lives, but now we're discovering all the joys and pitfalls of dog ownership. For the past week we've been petting, walking, chasing and endlessly watching the 5-month-old pup we've named Scout.

We planned this dog thing for a while, and Scout, a

Weimaraner/Beagle mix, is not what we originally envisioned in our loft apartment. Our place is in downtown Detroit, so my wife spent hours researching the best breeds for apartment and city liv-



Scout

ing. We found that any dog would take some training adapting to that environment, but we settled on a West Highland Terrier.

There were some problems.

We wanted to rescue a dog, but

the wait for Westies was very long and we weren't assured of ever getting a dog. The closest reputable breeders we found were in Ohio and Chicago.

We were prepared then to consider other small breeds, but following a bout of Christmas shopping in Westland, a trip to a pet store reminded us why we didn't start there in the first place.

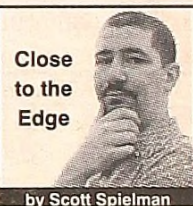
The salesperson brought out a Silky terrier puppy that could seemingly fit in my pocket. The kind girl asked if we would like to fill out a finance application to see if we would be approved for this dog.

A credit application for a dog? We started to see where this was going.

"How much is it?" we asked.

The girl replied, with a

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Close to the Edge

by Scott Spielman



Local ties

by Kevin Hill

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Change

FROM PAGE 2

up in there were put together at the stuffed animal version of *The Island of Dr. Moreau*.

Strange, though, how someone would choose to fritter away a little change in a fruitless quest for some worthless trinket, rather than add a little to a pot that will help fulfill a real need.

Sometimes, just a minor change in our routine can make a big difference in the lives of others less fortunate—and it doesn't have to cost a lot of money or take a lot of time.

Opinion

FROM PAGE 2

essentially apply for a public job and therefore receive a rather public snub. We think the key word, here, is public, though. Anyone not willing to suffer through that minor indignity probably isn't well suited for service on the council, anyway.

The legal opinion turned up some other interesting information, too, in that any member of the council could be appointed

Unfortunately, there will always be some request for donations to help others in our society. Equally unfortunately, there will always be those who try to attract our attention with mutated stuffed horses or bouncing balls with super hero icons on them (a personal weakness of mine).

Maybe a little change will help reduce the need for the first and eliminate the market for the other. Next year, I'm going to try something different. I'm going to resist the temptation, forego the claw and save my change to give to a charitable organization, instead.

After all, how many stuffed animals does anyone need?

to fulfill the mayoral spot and that whoever is appointed to the council in January will have to run to keep it not once, but twice. The appointment only lasts until the November election, while the respective terms of Councilman Richard LeBlanc—who's leaving the council to serve in Lansing—and Wild, who most likely will—and should—win the mayoral post, end at the end of December. Appointees will have to run to fill out that month, as well as a new term—should they choose.

Send us your letters

The Journal Newspapers welcomes all letters to the editor. Letters should be addressed to: The Editor, The Journal Newspapers, 35540 Michigan Ave., Wayne, Michigan 48184. All letters will be considered for publication and may be edited for content, space and length.

That's a little silly, in our estimation, and might be a good portion of the charter to amend. The scenarios that could come up may confuse voters.

A brief sentence may be enough to change that and help streamline the process if it comes up in the future. Our legalese isn't quite up to snuff, so we don't feel comfortable suggesting such a line. Fortunately, we don't have to—Plakas has shown the ability to easily handle such work. He's done a good job with the issue, thus far.

Scout

FROM PAGE 2

straight face:

"He's usually \$1599 but he's on sale for \$1499."

It was soon clear she meant more than \$1,000 dollars, not less than \$20. With all our other financial obligations, that meant we'd be paying for this dog for two years. The puppy was precious and was no doubt destined for a new home—but we weren't the ones about to add a monthly dog payment.

So, we politely handed back the little guy and headed to the Michigan Humane Society Berman Center in Westland. Some of the dogs were older than we wanted, or too big, or had too many behavior issues for first-time owners like us.

Then we saw him: the dog that for the last week has been trotting around our place and sniffing throughout the city center. He's not so young so he's quickly grasping the rules and learning to harness that puppy energy. Many downtown visitors seem happily surprised to see a dog (and hence, a city resident) near the ice skating rink.

Many people may buy or res-

cue a puppy this Christmas, or get one as a gift. Don't rush into it, though. We thought long and hard about how we would have to change our lives to make sure the dog we picked would be able to stay with us.

The shelter told us that Scout had been turned in as a stray after Thanksgiving, though he had tags identifying his owner. The shelter called, but the owner told them they didn't want the dog anymore.

Animal shelters say a lot of pets are surrendered to them after the holidays because people bought them too hastily. Know that a puppy or even an adult dog will take up a lot of time and test your patience. It can be very difficult to housetrain a very young puppy in the cold weather, and this time of year just has too many distractions for families. That can be stressful for the dog. You can't be distracted, either, while your puppy adjusts to its new home: your life will become all about the dog.

Which brings me back to that chewy bone, this year's toy of choice. I guess we've been so busy with this dog that I haven't thought much about what to get everybody else for Christmas.

Though Scout might like that Elmo...

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE ROMULUS CITY COUNCIL HELD DECEMBER 4, 2006, IN THE ROMULUS CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER 11111 S. WAYNE ROAD, ROMULUS, MICHIGAN 48174.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mayor Pro Tern Randolph Gear.
Present: John Barden, Ellen Craig-Bragg, LeRoy Burcroff, Harry Crout, William Crova, Randolph Gear, William Wadsworth.
Officials in Attendance:
Linda R. Choate, Clerk
Pledge of Allegiance
Roll Call

1. Motion by Crova, supported by Barden to approve the agenda as presented.

Roll Call Vote Showing: Ayes -Barden, Bragg, Burcroff, Crout, Crova, Gear, Wadsworth.
Nays - None.
Motion Carried Unanimously.

06-401

2. Motion by Wadsworth, supported by Bragg to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the Romulus City Council held November 27, 2006.

Roll Call Vote Showing: Ayes - Barden, Bragg, Burcroff, Crova, Gear, Wadsworth.
Nays - None.
Abstain - Crout.
Motion Carried.

06-402

3. Motion by Burcroff, supported by Barden to grant approval of PC-2006-032/033 Panacea Industrial Park Special Land Use request of a 38,663 sq.ft. cross dock facility and vehicle purchase/lease facility consistent with the recommendation of the city planner memorandum dated November 2, 2006. Subject property is located on a 14.9+- acre parcel on the east side of Middlebelt Road between Smith and Ecorse Roads. DP#'s 82-80-046-99-0027-000, 82-80-04699-0028-000, 82-80-046-99-0029-000, 82-82-046-99-0031,700, 82-80-046-99-0041,000.

Roll Call Vote Showing: Ayes - Barden, Bragg, Burcroff, Crout, Crova, Gear, Wadsworth.
Nays - None.
Motion Carried Unanimously.

06-403

4A. Motion by Wadsworth, supported by Crova to adopt a resolution recognizing the closure of deep-injection well at Inkster Road and Citrin Drive. Entire resolution on file in the Clerks Office.

Roll Call Vote Showing: Ayes - Barden, Bragg, Burcroff, Crout, Crova, Gear, Wadsworth.
Nays - None.
Motion Carried Unanimously.

4. Motion by Crova, supported by Barden to accept the Chairperson's Report.

Roll Call Vote Showing: Ayes -Barden, Bragg, Burcroff, Crout, Crova, Gear, Wadsworth.
Nays - None.
Motion Carried Unanimously.

06-404

6A1. Motion by Barden, supported by Wadsworth to approve second reading and

final adoption of Budget Amendment 06-07-16, introduced at the meeting of November 27, 2006.

Roll Call Vote Showing: Ayes -Barden, Bragg, Burcroff, Crout, Crova, Gear, Wadsworth.
Nays - None.
Motion Carried Unanimously.

06-405

6A2. Motion by Burcroff, supported by Bragg to concur with the Administration and schedule an Executive Session in the City Council Chambers, 11111 Wayne Road, Romulus, Michigan 48174, on Monday, December 11, 2006 at 7:00 p.m, for the purpose of discussing personnel issues.

Roll Call Vote Showing: Ayes - Barden, Bragg, Burcroff, Crout, Crova, Gear, Wadsworth
Nays - None.
Motion Carried Unanimously.

06-406

6A3. Motion by Wadsworth, supported by Barden to concur with the recommendation of Julie Albert, City Assessor and re-appoint Beverly McAnally and David Paul to the Board of Review with terms commencing January 1, 2007 and expiring December 31, 2008.

Roll Call Vote Showing: Ayes - Barden, Bragg, Burcroff, Crout, Crova, Gear, Wadsworth
Nays - None.
Motion Carried Unanimously.

06-407

6C. Motion by Crova, supported by Burcroff to concur with City Attorney, Barry Seifman and approve two (2) American Tower Corporation Modification Cell Tower Lease Agreements with respect to certain real property located at Firestation 4, 28777 Eureka Road, Romulus, Michigan, 48174 ("the Lease"); American Tower Site Name: Metro-airport and American Tower Site Number: 305684.

Roll Call Vote Showing: Ayes - Barden, Bragg, Burcroff, Crout, Crova, Gear, Wadsworth
Nays - None.
Motion Carried Unanimously.

12. Motion by Wadsworth, supported by Barden to adjourn the regular meeting of the Romulus City Council.

Roll Call Vote Showing: Ayes - Barden, Bragg, Burcroff, Crout, Crova, Gear, Wadsworth.
Nays - None.
Motion Carried Unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda R. Choate, City Clerk
City of Romulus, Michigan

I, Linda R. Choate, City Clerk for the City of Romuius, Michigan do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true copy of the minutes of the regular meeting of the Romulus City Council held December 4, 2006.

Linda R. Choate, Clerk
City of Romulus, Michigan

Publish: December 21, 2006

Time for a tune up

Legislator hopes to 'repair' faulty driver responsibility law

Scott Spielman
Editor

The Michigan Driver Responsibility Law is headed for a tune up—or may disappear down the road, altogether.

State Rep. Phil LaJoy (R-Canton) who will give up his post as chair of the House Transportation Committee when the democrats take control of the house next year, heard testimony this week from judges in western Wayne County that urged a revision of the law.

LaJoy said he's going to make that a priority.

"I'm going to do my best in the next session to get it fixed," LaJoy said.

The law was enacted in 2003 and designed to encourage traffic safety by deterring potentially dangerous driving behavior. It allows the state to levy a fee against a driver with seven or more points on his or her record within a 2-year period, but also levies a fee for certain specific offenses such as reckless driving, driving with a suspended or revoked license or without proof of insurance. The fees vary with the offense, but they can be as much as \$1,000 over 2 years. Drivers pay the \$500 each year when they renew their licenses.

The bill went through the legis-

lature while LaJoy was heading the committee, but he said he acted on it because he thought the goal was a good one.

"I had no idea of the unintended consequences of this bill," he said. "It's a poor people's tax. It's wrong and we need to fix it."

Many people who are cited for these relatively common occurrences cannot afford to pay the fines and the other costs associated with it. If someone who chooses not to—or can't afford to—pay the secretary of state to lift the restriction on his or her license, gambling that they won't get pulled over again, they'll face even stiffer penalties if and when their luck runs out.

Continued concern—and complaints—about the law caused LaJoy to form a subcommittee to come up with a recommendation for possible fixes.

Judge Brian Oakley from the 34th District Court in Romulus and Judge Mike Gerou of the 35th District Court in Plymouth both testified last week. Neither is a fan of the law.

"This law has little impact on how a person drives," Oakley said. "The problem with the law is that the those who are least able to afford the fees are the ones who are least able to avoid them. The people who have the most difficulty with this law are those who get



State Rep. Phil LaJoy (center) welcomed Judge David Parrott (Left) and Judge Mike Gerou (right) to Lansing to testify on modifying or eliminating the Drivers Responsibility Law.

a \$100 ticket and don't come to court because they can't afford to pay it.

"At that point they are then driving on a suspended license and if they are pulled over they're penalized for it," he added. "It's a vicious cycle that builds on itself. I'd love to see it go away completely."

"At best, this law is an extremely regressive tax; in many instances it's a debtor's prison,"

Gerou agreed. "By my estimate, at least 85-90 percent of those charged do not have driving offenses involving alcohol or drugs—nor do they have excessive points or significant criminal histories.

"The norm is you have someone earning \$8 or \$10 an hour driving to or from work who gets pulled over for either a civil infraction or defective equipment who is then arrested because of an

unpaid civil infraction," he added. "I feel for those people and it is our responsibility to try to help them turn their lives around."

LaJoy said the law generates about \$80 million a year for the state, which is one factor in eliminating it. Even so, he said he would consider that approach, if the subcommittee said it was warranted.

"I wouldn't mind it at all," he said.



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THE SCENE

the PURSUIT of HAPPYNESS

Movie fails to entertain, inspire

No one ever said the pursuit of happiness was easy. They never said it would be long, grueling and boring, either. That's what we get with *The Pursuit of Happyness*—which is “based on a true story” about a single father going from homelessness to multi-millionaire stockbroker with a 5-year-old son in tow.

It sounds like the ideal scripted storyline but, unfortunately, there's more pursuit than actual happiness.

Leave it to Hollywood to botch a perfect and “true” rags-to-riches story handed to it—signed, sealed and delivered—by the real-life main character himself. The only thing missing was a little pink bow on top. It's not that it's a bad story, because it's not. It's actually quite fantastic. The presentation was just off.

A story that could have been told in an hour was dragged out for twice that, stringing the audience along with scene after tedious scene of father and son sleeping in one precarious spot after another and a trite and very unnecessary voiceover. And rather than reward viewers with a dramatic and happy ending that such a story deserves, we are punished with a flat and unfulfilling one followed by one of those insulting “by the way” screen blurbs. You know, one of those three-line structures that fade in before the credits roll that say something like: afterward so-and-so did this and lived happily ever after—telling rather than showing. Those little blurbs are sometimes what people really want or should see.

San Francisco, 1981, is the backdrop for the story. It was a time when unemployment rates were soaring, the Rubik's Cube

was at its height of popularity and Reaganomics was dawning on the horizon.

Pursuit centers on Chris (Will Smith), a likable and charismatic individual who is also a dreamer. He's a Navy veteran who sinks his family's savings into a truckload of portable bone density scanners that he must resell to hospitals and doctor offices for a profit. Unfortunately, the expensive devices are just that—expensive—and nobody is buying. He must sell two a month, which he can't, just to make rent. His wife, Linda (Thandie Newton), is pulling double shifts at the laundry to help make ends meet but only becomes bitter and overwhelmed with the impoverished lifestyle. She loves their son Christopher (played by Smith's real son, Jaden) but once Chris decides he wants to be a stockbroker she leaves both behind. Despite being wifeless, carless and penniless, Chris drops everything for a six-month unpaid internship at Dean Witter where he must compete against 19 others who have more experience and a better education than he does for one job opening.

He gets into the program but only spirals downward from there.

He and his son are booted from their apartment, forcing them to live in a motel. Unable to make payments there, they are forced to the streets where they spend nights on buses, subway cars, shelters and even in a public bathroom. When Chris is not learning the ropes at Dean Witter, he is trudging through the streets of San Francisco with a scanner in one

hand and his son in the other. It's hard not to view each as a ball and chain holding him back.

Why the real Gardner didn't decide to leave his son with relatives or his estranged wife so

he could finish the program in less dramatic fashion is anyone's guess. Maybe it's better explained in his book of the same name.

Surprisingly, among all the Oscar talk, Smith's performance

felt flat and there was little chemistry between real father and son on screen.

Although his fall seems endless, Chris manages to keep his eye on the great American dream that, according to the film, means to be rich. I would have settled for just not being poor or homeless at that point, but if you dream you better dream big.

Unfortunately, in the end there is little to be happy about with *the Pursuit*. It's a depressing movie about a sad situation with a static ending.

Reviewed By
Jeff Novak
Staff Writer



2 local Denny's close

Meghan Chatham
Staff Writer

Declining patronage and increased competition were cited as the reasons the Denny's restaurant in Westland shut down without notice last Monday after 30 years in the community.

Since 1976, Denny's had operated at the corner Wayne Road and Central City Parkway just across from Westland Shopping Center. According to Debbie Atkins, spokesperson for the company, that changed when an annual review earlier this year turned up a problem.

"We did not have the customer traffic to justify continuing to operate there," she said.

Although the South Carolina-based spokesperson was unfamiliar with the details of the Westland situation, she said that "many" closures of this sort are due to changes in the area, such as an increase in competition. She couldn't say precisely when the decision to shut down the store was made or whether the slow business was a problem a long time in the making or a recent development.

Whatever the reasons, the result is still the same. The 25 employees learned of the closure the day it happened. She added that although it may seem harsh, it

is a common practice in the restaurant business because it is a good way to ensure that there will still be staffing available to see the business through the final days.

"That is not unusual for our industry," Atkins said.

All of the employees, she said, were offered transfers to other locations in Plymouth, Belleville, Taylor, and Riverview.

Now, the sign is down, the windows boarded up, and there is a Realtor's sign out front. However, William Caya, director of economic development for the City of Westland, said that he's optimistic that the site will be back in use quickly.

"I think that property is going to grab a lot of interest," he said. "It's a great location."

Westland isn't the only area coping with a suddenly vacant Denny's location. The Romulus restaurant, located at 9559 Middlebelt Road, also closed on Dec. 11. Problems with the building lease were cited as the reason for that closure. As in Westland, Atkins said the 35 employees were offered transfers to other area restaurants. It had been in the community since 1992.

Calling the closures the result of "local situations," Atkins said that the company plans to continue to operate the other 11 Detroit-area restaurants.



Bowled over

Santa Claus stopped by Town 'N Country Lanes in Westland on Dec. 10 to help the Plymouth/Westland Grange 389 raise money for area children's groups. The Bowling with Santa event ended up attracting 116 participants—more than twice the original estimate and collecting \$200 for the Westland Goodfellows, \$100 for Wildwood Elementary School, and \$100 for the Stottlemeyer Early Childhood Center. Photo by Ken Garner.

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FRI/SAT 11:10, 1:35, 4:00, 7:05, 9:25
SUN 11:10, 1:35, 4:00, MON 4:00, 7:05, 9:25

ROCKY BALBOA (PG)
FRI/SAT 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45
SUN 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, MON 5:15, 7:30, 9:45

ERAGON (PG)
FRI/SAT 12:40, 2:50, 5:00, 7:10, 9:30
SUN 12:40, 2:50, 5:00, MON 5:00, 7:10, 9:30

CHARLOTTE'S WEB (G)
FRI/SAT 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:45
SUN 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:45

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS (PG-13)
FRI/SAT 11:20, 1:50, 4:20, 6:50, 9:20
SUN 11:20, 1:50, 4:20, MON 4:20, 6:50, 9:20

APOCALYPTO (R) FRI/SAT/MON 9:05
UNACCOMPANIED MINORS (PG)
FRI-SUN 11:30 AM

HAPPY FEET (PG) FRI/SAT 2:00, 4:20, 6:40
SUN 2:00, 4:20, MON 4:20, 6:40

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Record of accomplishment

Students hope reading feat will earn them Guinness honor

Andrea King
Staff Writer

Students at Edgemont Elementary School are reading their way toward a world record—at least that's their intention.

Anita Norman, a third grade teacher at the school, discovered a way to help her third grade class bolster their vocabulary while participating in a nationwide contest to attempt to break the Guinness World Record for the 'Most People Reading Aloud Simultaneously in Multiple Locations.'

Students at Edgemont—as well as other schools around the country—read a passage last week from the book *Charlotte's Web* in an attempt to break the world reading record. Everyone who participated—schools, hospitals and libraries—were to read from the classic E.B White tale of friendship, kindness, selfless giving and miracles at the same time on Dec. 13.

"Our class was reading the book and planning to see the movie so I thought: 'what a great way to introduce new words, show teamwork and discover new vocabulary,'" said Norman. "Plus, the kids get participation, reading and excitement."

Every student read the passage from the story that celebrates the moment Charlotte and Wilbur, two of the main characters, meet for the first time. It also introduces the story to fans that haven't read it since childhood, officials said.

"It's my all-time favorite book," said Principal Karen Mida. "It's great exposure to our kids and it's a really neat thing that makes the students feel special."

The record attempt coincides with the

new movie release of *Charlotte's Web*, about a small pig that finds the most powerful force in the world is the bond of friendship.

Wilbur is the runt of the litter, and his youthful demeanor that makes him seem naïve to other animals in his new barn. But Charlotte—the spider that lives in the rafters—welcomes him as a friend. Their friendship is shown to be a lasting one when the other animals reveal that Wilbur's days are numbered and it seems that only a miracle will save his life. A determined Charlotte spins words into her web in an effort to convince the farmer that Wilbur is worth saving. Through this story of friendship and kindness, the aim is to build awareness of the wonder and miracles often found in the simplest things.

"The teamwork shown between the barn animals and personification is another huge reason for doing this," said Norman.

According to the Guinness World Record, the current record of the largest number of people reading the same piece of literature aloud, simultaneously and in multiple locations is 155,528 students from 737 schools throughout the United Kingdom. They read the poem *Daffodils* by William Wordsworth on March 19, 2004.

"There's about 200,000 all over that signed up so I hope we made the record," Norman said.

Belleville Mayor Tom Fielder and Belleville Police Chief Gene Taylor were on hand to serve as witnesses and sign a statement for the world reading record. Edgemont teachers should know in about six weeks if the students broke the reading record.



Janef Ley (above) a second grade teacher, reads the chosen part of *Charlotte's Web* to her students. Edgemont Principal Karen Mida and Paraprofessional Teacher Debra McWilliams (right) help some second grade students with the passage in hopes to beat the reading record.



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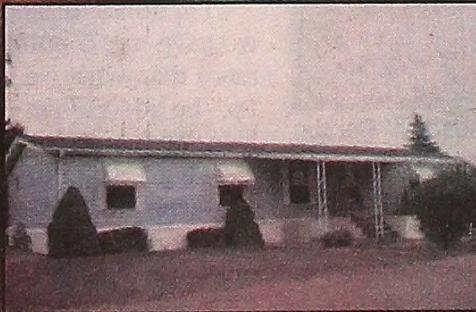
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SPORTS

Vikings earn 2nd win with late rally Friday

Jeff Novak
Staff Writer

The Inkster Vikings overcame a rocky start to prevail against Wyandotte Roosevelt on Friday, 64-42.

The Vikings found themselves trailing, 6-0, in the opening minutes of the fast-paced first quarter. John Crawford hit a deuce to bring them within three, but Wyandotte cut loose for a string of seven to obtain a 10-point advantage.

Inkster settled down in the second and scored 18 points from five different players. J.J. Snelling, Dushon Staton and Josh Howard scored in order at the top of the frame, knotting the score at 15. Inkster helped itself to a 27-21 halftime advantage with a 12-4 run that included triples by Crawford and Snelling.

Lawrence Matthews had the biggest impact for the Inkster in the third. He scored three consecutive triples to give his team a 36-25 advantage.

"He's a streak shooter and fundamentally sound," said Inkster Coach Greg Carter. "When he feels it we want him to shoot it."

From there Inkster set a pace Wyandotte couldn't handle. They coasted to a 53-35 lead with a triple by Anne Goree to end the third.

The Vikings went up by as many as 23 points in the fourth to finish out the game.

"At first (Wyandotte) played extremely hard," Carter said. "We had to get used to their offense. They were doing a lot of back screening and they have a bunch of good shooters, but I think we clamped down and made them shoot over the top. And I think, more importantly, we were patient on the offensive end. We were able to kick it out and get some rebounds and run the ball."

"We wanted to come out in the third quarter and establish a larger lead and get them out of their 1-3-1 that they play so well and we were able to do that," he added.

Crawford led the Vikings with 23 points. Matthews added 10 and Michael Bailey and Snelling each added nine. John Barry scored 23 for Wyandotte.

"We're a young team," Carter said. "We have a lot of seniors but they didn't have a lot of playing time last year. I think they're feeling a little more comfortable playing and that's a good sign."

The win puts Inkster at 2-0 so far this season. The Vikings will now be tested with a streak of nine road games on the horizon. Inkster won't play at home until they host Dearborn at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 30.



John Crawford in triple-teamed by Wyandotte on Friday. He led the Vikings with 23 points in the victory.

Inkster 60, Cherry Hill Academy 54

Inkster won their home and season opener, 60-54, against Cherry Hill Academy on Tuesday.

Matthews led the Vikings with 16 points in the win.

"We didn't play well in the first game," Carter said. "(Cherry Hill) played a 1-3-1 zone and we didn't handle it very well, in the first half, but did better against it in the second half. We played well but not necessarily smart. But it was our first

game and Cherry Hill's fourth. You could tell it was our first game."

Inkster got a late start due to an elongated football season that produced a state final showing for the Vikings. Carter also coached the football team that consisted of several basketball players. He's still trying to figure out players' roles.

"Matthews and Snelling are leaders and Crawford leads by example," Carter said. "I think we will have more leaders emerge as the season goes on."

Chiefs fall to 0-3

Jeff Novak
Staff Writer

Canton fell to 0-3 with losses to Troy Athens and South Lyon last week.

The Chiefs turned over the ball 26 times against Athens. The miscues led to a 59-48 loss last Tuesday.

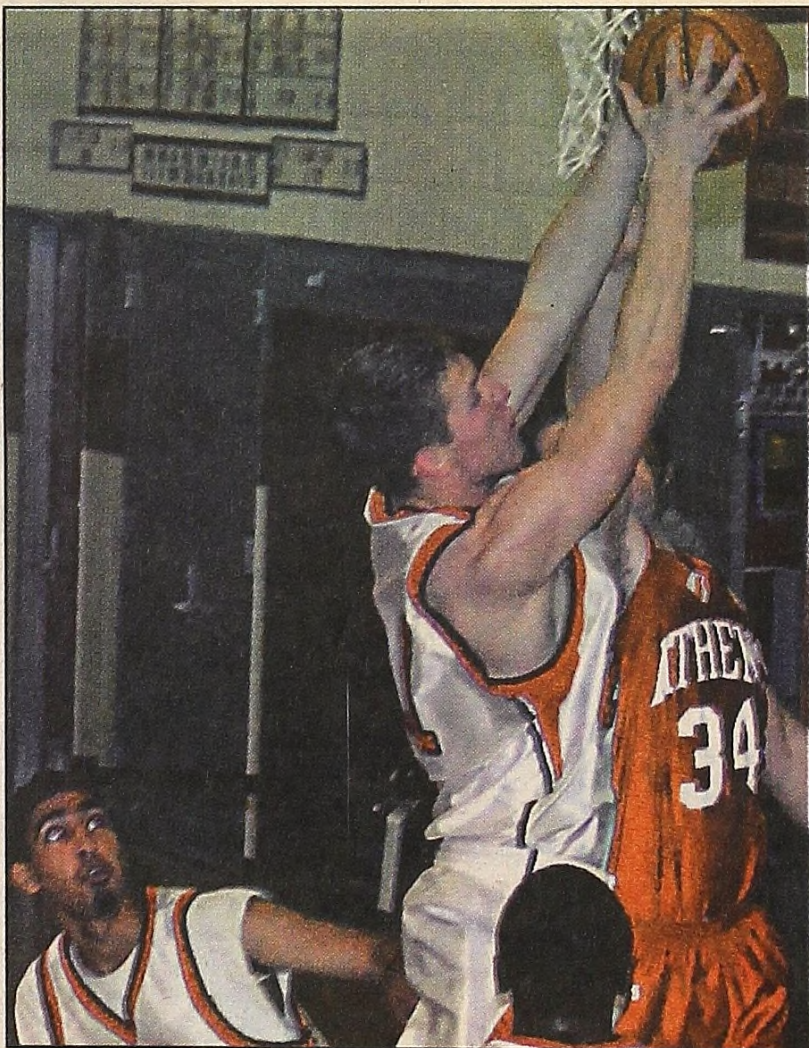
"We kept it to within four or five through the fourth quarter," said Canton Coach Charlie Paye. "We would get close, but then we would miss a shot and/or turn the ball over. We never got over the hump. We gave up 59 points, which is more than we want to."

Canton raced to a 17-14 lead at the end of the first quarter, but the Trojans capitalized on Canton turnovers in the second to outscore the Chiefs, 16-8, in the second to overtake the lead.

After the break, Athens extended its lead with a 14-12 third quarter and, despite Canton's surges in the fourth frame, outscored the Chiefs, 15-11 in the finale.

"They played us tough and made some shots," Paye said. "They are in a good league and play against some tough competition. And we just didn't play very well."

Senior center Ryan Waidmann and senior guard Josh Butler each scored 12 for Canton. Waidmann also had five rebounds



Steve Paye makes a layup against Troy Athens last Tuesday. Canton lost the game, 59-48, and are now 0-3 in the preseason. Photo by Ken Garner

and Butler three assists. Senior forward Steve Paye scored 10 with six rebounds and three assists.

Coach Paye said that some players like Butler and senior guard Ryan Langdon—both were role players last year—are still defining their new roles on the team.

Canton lost a nail-biter to South Lyon, 47-45, on Friday.

It came down to the wire with a chance for Canton to tie or win but the final shot fell short.

With Canton down by four points in the final seconds, junior forward Neil Sharma was fouled on an attempted triple. He made the first two free throws, but the third kicked off the rim and the Chiefs couldn't knock down the

See Chiefs, page 11

Belleville holds off Wayne

Jeff Novak
Staff Writer

the session and had six different scorers.

Whatever Hickman told the players between periods worked.

Sophomore guard Kourea Hayes provided a much-needed spark, scoring the first two baskets in the second frame, giving the Tigers their first lead since the opening minutes of the game.

Senior center Anthony Waffer was effective in the paint for Belleville. He used his 6-foot-5 frame to knock down eight points in the second—he had 10 for the half. Freshman forward Omari Hoke had key defensive rebounds. The Tigers scored 30 in the period to take a hefty 43-28 lead at the intermission.

"We weren't getting the shots that we wanted—they weren't going in," Hickman said. "Then I realized that we could get some post touches and that's what really turned it around. Omari Hoke and Kourea Hayes, a freshman and sophomore, came in and really turned the game around for us and gave us some energy."

The third quarter belonged to Wayne. The Zebras, with a combination of six scorers, racked up 20 points to narrow Belleville's advantage to 57-48. It wasn't enough to overcome the first half deficit. Belleville outscored the Zebras, 13-7, in the final eight minutes to hang on for the win.

"I thought we played hard," said Wayne Coach Wayne Woodard. "We were up 16-8 in the

See Hoops, page 11

First-year Belleville Coach Don Hickman is no gourmet chef but he had the right recipe to win in the Belleville Tigers' season opener on Tuesday night.

It wasn't easy, but with the right ingredients of experience, teamwork and enthusiasm, Belleville pulled out a 70-55 victory at Wayne Memorial.

The Tigers overcame a first-quarter deficit, raced to a 15-point lead at the half and held on for the team's first victory.

"It was our first game and we had some jitters," Hickman said. "(Wayne) jumped on us and made some shots early. I took a timeout and told the kids that we were all right and we made a nice little run. By halftime we were pretty good."

"I'm a little disappointed that we gave up 55 points, which is more than what we want to give up," he added. "I'm proud of my kids. We have a lot of improving to do but I'm proud of them."

Wayne, with two games under its belt already this season, came out with serious intent to win. The Zebras were up by four before the Tigers got accommodated to the gym. John Hill's triple put Wayne up, 16-8, with just more than four minutes left to play in the opening quarter. Then Belleville switched things up, scoring the last five points of the frame to narrow the gap. The Tigers spread around the ball in

Hoops

FROM PAGE 10

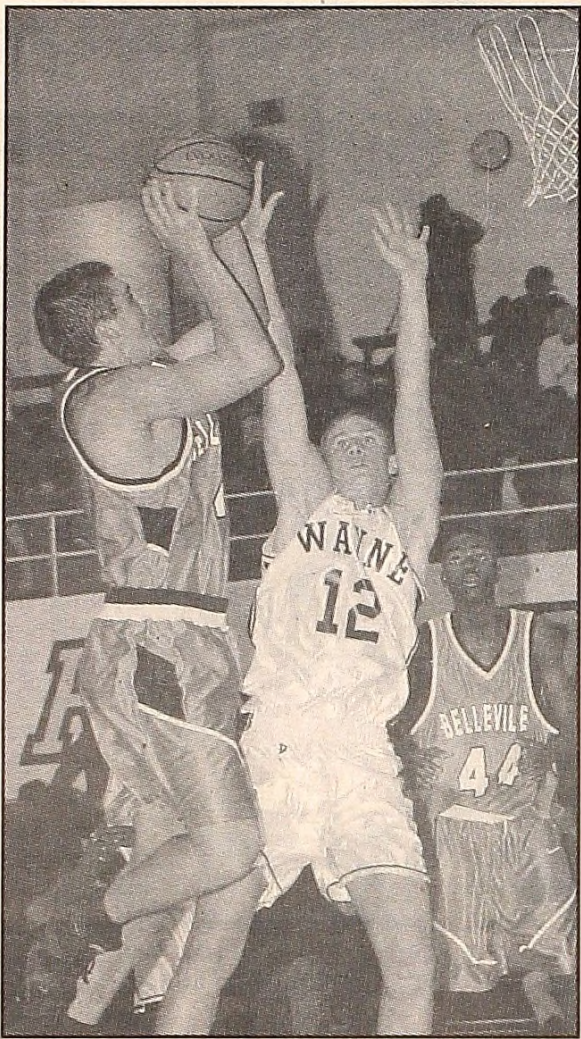
first quarter and (Belleville) weathered it. They tightened up their defense and they ran a better offense than we did. Consequently, they were able to cut into our lead. And once you're down 15 it's hard to come back from that."

Hill led all scorers with 19 for Wayne. Mike Lee added 16. Senior guard Darius Hardrick knocked down 16 for Belleville. Senior forward Brian Zantop added 14 for the Tigers and Waffer, 12. Belleville had nine total players score.

"A lot of teams have the 'guy' or the 'man' and we do not have that," Hickman said. "That's not a negative thing, that's a good thing. Somebody will emerge, but I think on any given night it might be a different person."

While Belleville celebrated starting the new season 1-0, Wayne slumped to 0-3.

"There are always concerns when you're 0-3 instead of 3-0," Woodard said. "But like I told the kids: three years ago we started out 0-5 and won the league. So, it's a long way to go. We're finding out some things that we have to work on. It's



Belleville's Brian Zantop takes a shot over Wayne's Josh Bayer in the Tiger's 70-55 victory last Tuesday. Belleville went on to defeat Willow Run, 58-43 on Friday.

not fun being 0-3 but it's not the end of the world. We have to take this as a learning experience and get better."

Chiefs

FROM PAGE 10

rebound at the buzzer.

Before that, Canton overcame a 12-9 deficit and tied the game at 20 at the half. The Lions squeaked out a one-point advantage at the end of the third to set up the exciting fourth quarter rally.

Sharma led the way with 17 for Canton. Waidmann added 16.

"South Lyon is a good team," Paye said. "I think they are the toughest team in the KVC this year. I think we played a lot bet-

ter in this game than previous ones. We really cleaned up turnovers. We only had 19 but six or seven of them were in the fourth."

Canton is now 0-3 three on the season but that isn't a concern for Coach Paye.

"We showed some progress last week," he said. "I would be concerned if we were playing well and losing but we just haven't been playing well. We were listed as 16th in the state and I don't know if that had an effect on the kids or not. But I think the kids are starting to realize that teams have put a bullseye on our backs."

Canton and Salem face off at 7 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 5 in the Canton North Gym.

More Sports

Ypsilanti Holiday Classic returns

Your favorite high school basketball team isn't playing at home this week but you're looking for some basketball action this holiday weekend anyway.

Well, look no further.

Ypsilanti Lincoln High School is hosting its annual Holiday Classic basketball tournament on Saturday. Games will start as early as 11 a.m. and as late as 8 p.m.

The lineup this year is:

Inkster vs. Battle Creek Central at 11 a.m.

Ypsilanti Lincoln vs. Jackson at 12:45 pm

Taylor Truman vs. Lansing Eastern at 2:30 pm

Dearborn Heights Robichaud vs. Lansing Sexton at 4:15 pm

Belleville vs. Benton Harbor at 6 p.m.

Ann Arbor Pioneer vs. Okemos at 8 p.m.

Admission is \$6 or \$5 with a nonperishable canned good. The canned goods will be donated to a local nonprofit organization.

Rockets fall to Novi, 52-49

The Rockets lost to Novi, 52-49, on the Wildcats' court last Tuesday. Glenn took a 12-10 lead after the first period of play but eight turnovers in the second allowed Novi to take a 26-18 half-time lead. The Rockets outscored the Wildcats 31-26 in the second half but it wasn't enough to rebound from the second quarter doldrums. Rob Jones scored 14. Keshawn Martin and Stefan Marken each had 11 and Jackie Wilson added 10. Glenn hosts cross-town rivals Wayne at 7 p.m. today.

Romulus lost to Pontiac Northern, 88-71, last Tuesday in Pontiac. Sophomore Rashard Porter led the Eagles with 15. The Eagles soared by Monroe, 88-45 on Thursday. Valdez Green scored 13 and Rod Walker 12 for Romulus.

Plymouth beat Walled Lake Central, 39-37. Brandon Roberts scored 12 for the Wildcats.

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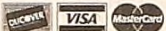
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SPORTS

Northville goes 2-0

Jeff Novak
Staff Writer

The halftime speech for the Northville Mustangs must have been inspiring.

The Mustangs overcame a 20-15 halftime deficit and defeated neighboring rival Novi, 51-45, at home on Friday night.

"I just told them to be patient," said Northville Coach Darrel Schumacher. "We thought that our defense was doing good; we just need to settle down and be patient offensively."

Part of it was due to Novi's defense, according to Schumacher. They left the 'Stangs a ton of wide open outside shots. Northville tried to take advantage, but missed the rim.

"I can't blame them for shooting," Schumacher said. "It's more my fault for not being prepared to handle that kind of defense."

Northville got back in the game with 23 second-half points from senior guard Alvin Storrs. He finished with 29 for the night, including an impressive 13-of-16 from the line. His biggest play was with 2:12 left in the game with the score tied at 40. He stole the ball and dunked, drawing a foul to make it a three-point play.

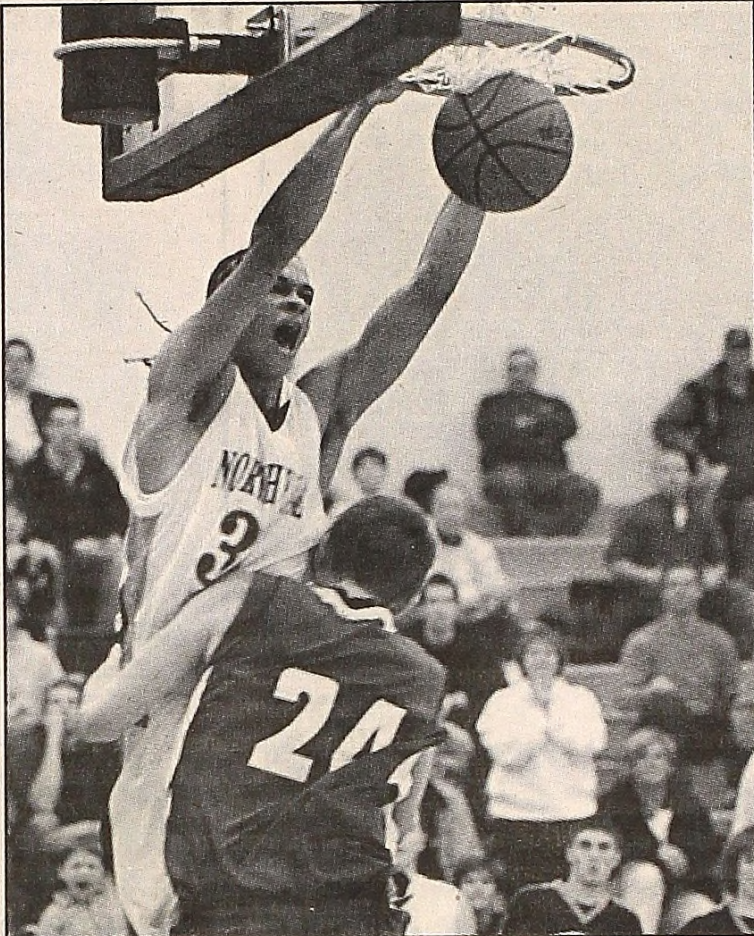
The victory protected a 694 home-game winning streak, making the contest a true a thriller for the home crowd the whole way through.

Both sides started with an aggressive defense. Junior forward Dan Kirkpatrick blocked Novi's 6-foot-8 junior center Tyler Hoover's shot and junior guard Steve Anderson stole an inbound pass at 5:30, forcing Novi to call its first time out.

Second-chance baskets were a rare commodity in the frame and Novi escaped with an 8-7 lead.

The second quarter saw strong defense and the score was unchanged until the 4:36 mark, when Northville junior David Burke drained a triple to give the Mustangs the lead. With 4:18 remaining, Mustang senior Alvin Storrs stole a pass and scored while drawing the foul. He converted to put Northville up 13-8. However, the Wildcats fought back. They drew two quick fouls and Caleb Dean made four free throws to close the gap and Novi pulled away to a 20-15 lead by halftime.

Northville began the third quarter scoring six straight points to retake the lead with a layup from Kirkpatrick. Senior forward Bret Spencer followed with a triple to add to the lead. The quarter ended with the Wildcats wilting under Northville's smothering



Northville's Alvin Storrs added a spark with a slam dunk in Friday's 51-45 victory over rival Novi on Friday. Photo by Diana Birdsall

defense. Northville led 29-26 at the end of three.

Novi regained the lead in the fourth off of a Hoover basket. Northville got big baskets from Martin Trautmanis from the line to make it 45-42.

With 0:40 left on the clock, Novi sophomore Brandon Bradford nailed a 3-point basket to tie the game. Mike Rogers answered with a basket to put Northville up for good, 47-45. Storrs finished the scoring from the line.

Dean led the Wildcats with 17 points, including a perfect 9-of-9 from the line. Sophomore guard Chris Bellamy added 10 points.

Northville will open the New Year at Churchill at 7 p.m. on Friday Jan. 5. The Mustangs then host John Glenn at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 9.

Canton gymnasts vault by Vassar

Jeff Novak
Staff Writer

Canton gymnasts took nearly every top spot in Saturday's meet at Vassar to win 134.3-116.25.

Teammates Jessie Murray and Kate Staley tied for first place with each scoring an 8.9. Olivia Stephens scored an 8.5 and Chelsea Selden landed in third with an 8.25.

No one came close to Staley on the bars. She blew away competition with a 9.05. Olivia Stephens and Jessie Murray both scored a 7.9 to tie for second and Chelsea Selden followed in third with a 7.5.

Selden balanced her way to first on the beam with an 8.9. Andrea Houdek and Staley tied for second with an 8.8. Murray was third (8.65).

Murray bounced back with a first place win in the floor exercise with the highest score of the competition—a 9.3. Courtney Ward (8.55) edged out Vassar's Hillary Opperman (8.5) for second place.

Staley's solid performance earned her first in the all around with a total score of 35.00. Murray finished in second (34.75), Selden in third (32.65) and Houdek fourth (31.85).

Canton's Kylie Hakala had a great day for the 'B' team, placing first on the vault, bars and floor.

Mallory Hudak placed first on the beam, second on vault and floor and first all-around. Samantha O'Flynn placed second on vault and third on floor while Katelyn Rutherford placed second on bars and beam and third on vault.

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1. Obituaries

AVENDT, Carol Ann, 61 of Wayne, MI, died Dec. 14, 2006. She was a 1963 graduate of Henry Ford High School. She is survived by her 3 children, Dawn Hargrave of St. Petersburg, FL, Richard Avendt of Des Moines, IA, and Deborah Caruso of Ferndale, MI; her parents, Marilyn Neubauer of Deltona, FL and Stanley Zapolski of Lincoln, MI; 3 brothers, Michael, Terry and Daniel; 9 grandchildren and 1 great grandchild. She also considered her cats, Precious and Trouble as her kids. She was the founder of the Coupon-aholics swap club on the website, family-corner.com. She donated to many charities including the Salvation Army, the Humane Society and the Wayne-Westland Library. She struggled with her health for 30 years. We all love her and know she is finally at peace. There was an immediate family only viewing at Uht Funeral Home. At her request, Ms. Avendt was cremated. Final arrangements were entrusted to Uht Funeral Home.

BLEVINS, Gary Wayne. May 4, 1952-Dec. 19, 2006. Beloved husband of Jeanette Lee Blevins. Loving father of Valerie Brady, Kelly Blevins, James Lee and Jesse Lee. Dearest son of Madeline Ruth and the late Norman Blevins. Dear brother of Roby Blevins, Kathy Bruce and the late Charles Fields and the late Harold Blevins. Dear grandfather of Matthew Blevins, Chelsea Osak and Grace Marshall. Gary was described best as a gentle spirit and will be dearly missed and always remembered. Funeral Fri., Dec. 22, 2006 instate 10 am with service at 11 am at Woodhaven Worship Center, 22131 Gudith Rd., Woodhaven, MI. Visitation Wed. 6-9pm and Thurs. 1-9pm at Voran Funeral Home, 5900 Allen Rd., Allen Park (Allen Park Chapel). voranfuneralhome.com

WOODS, Anna J., age 80 of Wayne, MI, died Dec. 18, 2006. Beloved wife of Richard for 62 years. Dear mother of David (Bernadine) and Nicole (Kevin) McBain. Grandmother of Jacqueline Woods, Kelli (Michael) McCoy, Jason Woods and the late Stacie McBain. Great grandmother of Destyni Woods. Sister of the late Betty Donaldson. Service Thurs., Dec. 21 at 11am at the Uht Funeral Home, 35400 Glenwood, Westland. In lieu of flowers, memorials to the American Cancer Society would be appreci-

ated. Please visit and post a tribute at: uhtfuneral-home.com.

9. Lost & Found

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2GCHC39N0L1220788

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6. Legal Notice

NOTICE TO ESTABLISH A BANK BRANCH
Notice is hereby given that the Main Street Bank, whose main
office is currently located at 201 E. Main Street, Northville, Wayne
County, Michigan, has made application to the Federal Deposit
Insurance Corporation to establish a branch to be located at 706
S. Main Street, Plymouth, Wayne County, Michigan.

Any person wishing to comment on this application may file his
or comments in writing with the Regional Director of the Federal
Deposit Insurance Corporation at its Chicago Regional Office at
500 West Monroe Street, Suite 3300, Chicago, Illinois 60661-
3697 not later than December 29, 2006. The non-confidential
portions of the application are on file in the regional office and are
available for inspection during regular business hours. Photocopies of the nonconfidential portion of the application file
will be made available upon request.

This notice is published pursuant to Part 303.7 of the Rules and
Regulations of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.
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By: Audrey M. Mistor-Jackman, President
Publish: December 21, 2006

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FOOD

Setting pretty

Garden Club shows holiday spirit with festive table settings

Sure, the tree is up, the garland strung, packages wrapped with extra care...but how do you make those Christmas dinners or lunches as special as the season?

Members of the Wayne Garden Club took the matter to heart at their December meeting last week when Claudia Rediske hosted the annual Christmas gathering. More than 40 of the 50 active club members attended the meeting to admire the place settings prepared by members and displayed throughout Rediske's Wayne home.

Members used everything from Haviland china and crystal to everyday tableware with themes from traditional to Santa with their table settings.

"It just adds to the festivities and the feeling of the season," Rediske said. "I was surprised we had so many members attend, but I think it just added to the charm of celebrating Christmas."

The Wayne Garden Club has been in existence for nearly a half-century and Rediske

remembers when her own mother-in-law was president back in the 1950s. "We just keep going and going," she noted with a chuckle.

Rediske, who has participated in the Festival of Trees for nearly a decade and won several awards for her skill at holiday trees, said the table settings were a real tribute to the skills of the club members.

"Each of them talked about what they had used, whether it was china or crystal or an heirloom," Rediske said. "We really enjoyed the event."

Experts agree that adding those special touches can make the holiday meal more festive and enjoyable for everyone—even the hostess.

"Don't drive yourself

crazy," noted Lynn Heath, a former manager at Marshall-Field's china and crystal department at Briarwood, "but make an effort and take some time with the tabletop."

She advises finding a theme, whether it be Santa, reindeer, angels or simply a color scheme for the holiday and carrying it through. "Try using ornaments at place settings, just to bring some color and shine to the table," she said. "Use some colored or metallic garland, depending on your theme, cut up for napkin rings...or use pretty ribbon down the center or edges of the table for some color and holiday spirit."

"You can also tie napkins with the same ribbon rather than napkin rings, or wrap the tableware in the napkin, then tie it up like a Christmas gift...there are any

number of things you can do to dress up your table for the holiday."

Heath also suggests tying ribbon around chair

backs into bows, and has even added small wreaths on the backs of chairs for more holiday drama.

"Find a theme, or a color, and go with it and have fun. Hang some ornaments with ribbon from the dining room chandelier...put a matching ornament on the bread or salad plates just for the fun of it," she advised.

And local chef Frank Agostini of E.G. Nick's in Plymouth agrees. Agostini has catered holiday parties for many very well known celebrities and has a lot of tricks up his sleeve to ensure that things go well.

"If you are doing a buffet, make sure that the dishes are not all at the same height," he said. "Find something to put under-

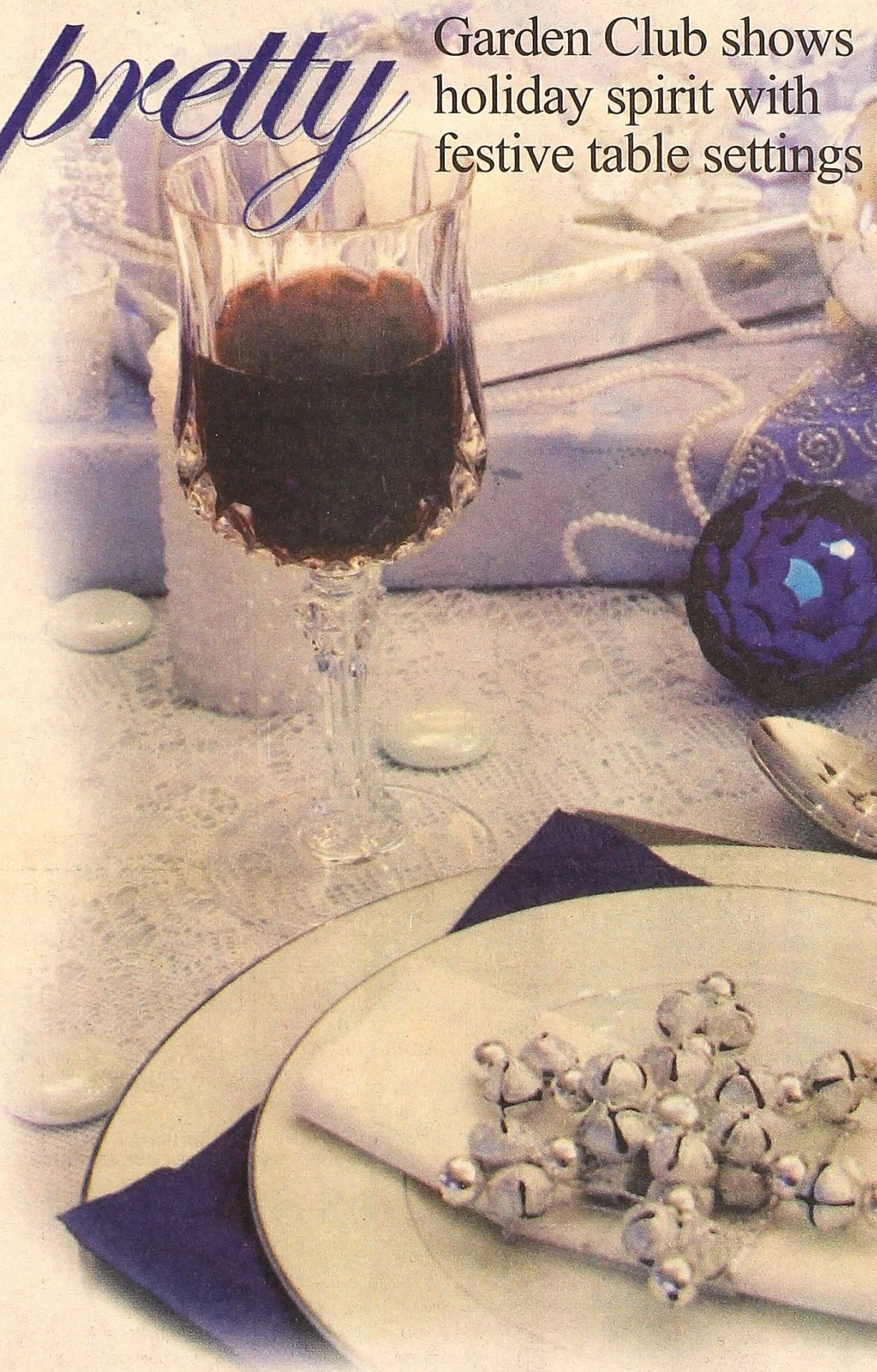
neath a few of them that will get them up off the table and at varied heights. It will make a difference. If you have to use a saucepan for height, cover it with a nice cloth napkin and put your serving dish on top...just make sure it won't slide off," Agostini said.

"And if you are doing a buffet, get some good quality gift boxes, like shirt boxes, put the top inside the bottom and wrap the doubled box with Christmas paper."

"Then have everybody put their plate, tableware and drink inside the box like a tray as they

go through the buffet line. It makes it far more comfortable, and if there isn't enough seating, the boxes can serve as little lap tables for guests."

"Beautiful tables do add to the festivities and the holiday," Rediske said. "It helps make memories."



Wayne Garden Club members Eve Watts, above left, Carol Cockrum, center, Judy Howton and Lois Press, at right, displayed centerpieces and table settings designed to add charm to holiday dinners and luncheons at their meeting this month.

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